

In Re: The Matter of the Proposal to Close)	Hon. Clifford L. Meacham (Ret.)
)	
Edward C. Delano Elementary School)	Independent Hearing Officer
and)	
Relocation of Genevieve Melody)	Monday, April 29, 2013 at 8:00 PM
Elementary School)	
Chicago, IL)	
)	

HEARING OFFICER REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The undersigned, a retired judge and attorney licensed to practice law in Illinois, was appointed to serve as an Independent Hearing Officer, pursuant to 105 ILSC 5/34-230(f) in the above matter. On April 29, 2013, at 5:30 P.M. a hearing was conducted in the Board Room of the offices of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, located at 125 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The hearing itself is required by law prior to the Board considering any proposal by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to take a "school action" such as closing a school. (155 ILCS 5/34-230 (h)). The CEO is required to announce any school actions which she proposes be taken prior to December 1 of each year (105 ILCS 5/34 230(b)).

Prior to December 1, 2012 Barbara Byrd-Bennett, CEO of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) made such a proposal to close the Edward C. Delano Elementary and Relocation of Genevieve Melody Elementary School and welcome Delano students to Melody, which will be relocated to 3937 W. Wilcox St. Delano is at this location; students will continue to attend school at the

same location albeit under Melody's administration and staff, and with Melody students. In addition, the geographic boundary currently associated with Melody will be reassigned to Helen M. Hefferan Elementary School. Melody will be the new neighborhood school for students living in the Delano boundary. Melody or Helen M. Hefferan Elementary School will be the new school for students living in the Melody boundary, depending on the student's home address. This contemplates students not currently enrolled at Melody.

When such a proposal is made, the CEO is required to give notice of her action. The notice is required to explain the basis for the proposed action and its compliance with applicable guidelines. The notice is also to be accompanied by a "draft School Transition Plan" identifying certain matters that concern all of the schools affected by the proposed "school action" (105 ILCS 5/34-230(c)(1)).

The law requires the notices given to identify at least three opportunities for the public to be heard on the proposal (105 ILCS 5/34-230(e)). There is to be a public hearing presided over by an independent hearing officer while the other two opportunities can be provided through public meetings which are conducted by a representative of the CEO (105 ILCS 5/34-230(g)).

The previously described "notices of action" must also inform the recipient of the time and place of both the required public meetings and hearing. These notices must be perfected no less than 30 days prior to the meeting/hearing taking place (105 ILCS 5/34-320(c)(5)).

Specifically, notices are to be provided to the parents and guardians of any schools that are the subject of any proposed action, the principal and the staff of the affected schools and the members of each school's local school council. In addition, notice is required to be given to

certain elected officials whose constituencies include the district served by the affected schools. Those officials include the State Senator(s), State Representative(s), and City Alderman. (10S ILCS 5/34-230(c)(3)). Finally, the public at large is to be notified through a publication in a newspaper of general circulation, of a brief summary of the proposed action together with the date, time and place of the hearings or meeting (10S ILCS 5/34-230(d)).

Performance of the requirements must precede the submission of a proposal of this kind to the Board. These requirements include the publication of the summaries of the public meetings on the District's Internet Website within five days following each meeting (10S ILCS 5/34-230(g)). With regard to the Public Hearing, the CEO is required to publish the hearing officer's report and findings on the District's website within five days after receiving it and at least 15 days prior to any Board action being taken on the subject proposal. In terms of the hearing officer's reporting obligation, he or she is required to summarize the proceedings of the public hearing and make a determination as to whether the CEO complied with the requirement of 10S ILCS 5/34-320 and the guidelines which have previously been promulgated and approved by the Board (10S ILCS 5/34-230 (f)(4)).

Accordingly, it appearing that the appropriate notices having been given, the instant public hearing was commenced.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTIONS

CPS proposes to close Delano, located at 3937 W. Wilcox based on the school's underutilization and relocate Melody to the property occupied by Delano. Delano students will continue to be educated in the same facility, albeit with Melody staff, administration, and

students. The proposal provides for families to consider other educational options. In addition, the geographic boundary associated with associated to Delano will be reassigned to Melody. A portion of Melody's current boundary will be assigned to Hefferan. The result is Melody will be the new neighborhood school for students living in the Delano boundary who are not currently enrolled at Melody.

NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice of the Hearing was sent to parents or guardian(s) of students, school personnel, and local School Board Council members as required by Illinois law and/or the Chicago Board of Education's applicable Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures. Notice of the Hearing was served via hand delivery to the schools and by publication on the CPS website and in the Chicago Sun Times.

Finally, Notice was sent to Alderman Jason C. Ervin and Alderman Michael Chandler, State Representative Derrick Smith, and State Senator Patricia Van Pelt on March 21, 2013 (see, CPS Compilation Exhibit, Tabs A1-A6).

HEARING and SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

Chicago Public School Representatives

The hearing officer introduced himself and discussed the process to be followed. He informed all in attendance that any persons wishing to submit additional materials for consideration could do so by delivering same to the CPS. Ms. Marzullo, a Certified Court

Reporter, was introduced, as was the fact that Spanish and Sign Language Interpreters were present. The Timekeeper, Mario, was introduced, and time constraints were noted. Attendees were informed that any submitted materials were to be delivered to the Board no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 26, 2013. Approximately fifty-three (53) people attended the hearing (exclusive of Board personnel), and seventeen members of the public addressed the issues.

Ms. Chan, attorney for CBE, asked for admission of the CEO's Exhibit 1, consisting of a binder of documents submitted in support of the proposal. The binder was available for public viewing.

The binder included written statements and documents including letters to parents and guardians, school staff members, Local School Council members, draft transition plans, notices, affidavits, Illinois School Code provisions, documents on CSB policies on school performance, remediation, probation, attendance boundaries, space utilization standards, the CEO's guidelines for the 2012/2013 actions, procedures on public hearings, transcripts of two public hearings, the written statement of Benjamin Felton, the written statement of Wanda Washington.

The binder was ADMITTED.

Statement of Benjamin Felton, Portfolio Planner

Good evening, Your Honor. My name is Benjamin Felton, and I am a Portfolio Planner for the Chicago Public Schools. I have been in this position since July of 2012.

As a Portfolio Planner, I manage strategic planning to improve the efficient utilization of CPS facilities. Prior to joining CPS, I worked as a teacher at CPS facilities. Prior to becoming a

Portfolio Planner, I worked as a teacher at CPS. I then joined the Tennessee Department of Education, where I focused on teacher and principal recruitment and contributed to the development of the department's five-year strategic plan. I have a Bachelor of Science from Vanderbilt University.

I have been asked to appear at this hearing today to convey to you, the parents and the community, as well as interested members of the public in attendance, information regarding the space utilization of the Delano facility with respect to the proposal to close Delano.

According to the Chief Executive Officer's Guidelines for the 2012-2013 school year, the CEO may propose to close a school if it is underutilized based on CPS Space Utilization Standards and student enrollment numbers recorded on the 20th attendance day for the 2012-2013 school year.

The CEO may only propose a closure if the impacted students have the option to enroll in a higher performing school and the resulting space utilization after the closure will not exceed the facility's enrollment efficiency range as defined by the CPS Space Utilization Standards.

I will discuss the details regarding the space utilization of this proposal, while my colleague Wanda Washington, will discuss the performance of the welcoming school and highlight the supports being offered in the draft transition plan.

Delano is currently located at 3937 West Wilcox Street. It is an elementary school that, as of the 20th day of attendance for the 2012-2013 school year, serves 395 students in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten through 8th grades.

To understand the enrollment efficiency range of a facility, Chicago Public Schools utilizes its Space Utilization Standards, which are located in your binder at Tab B14. The enrollment efficiency range is plus or minus 20% of the facility's ideal enrollment.

For elementary school buildings, the ideal enrollment is defined as the number of allotted homerooms multiplied by 30. The number of allotted homerooms is approximately 76%-77% of the total classrooms available.

As an elementary school's enrollment increases above the efficiency range, a school may be considered overcrowded as programming options are reduced or compromised.

As an elementary school's enrollment decreases below the efficiency range, a school may be considered underutilized as classrooms are unused or poorly programmed, making the use of limited resources less effective.

A typical elementary school building has a total of 39 classrooms. Therefore, the number of allotted homerooms, approximately 76%-77% of 39, is 30 classrooms. Multiplying 30 classrooms by 30 equals the ideal enrollment number of 900. Finally the enrollment efficiency range is plus or minus 20 percent of 900, which is 720 - 1080.

If a school in this typical elementary school building had an enrollment below 720, it would be considered underutilized. Alternatively, if the school's enrollment was above 1080, it would be overcrowded.

There are 47 total classrooms within the Delano facility. Approximately 76%-77% of this number is 36, the number of allotted homerooms. This number multiplied by 30 yields the ideal enrollment of the facility, which is 1080.

As such, the enrollment efficiency range of the Delano facility is between 864-1296 students.

As I stated the enrollment of Delano, as of the 20th day of attendance for the 2012-2013 school year, is 395. This number is below the enrollment efficiency range, and thus, the school is underutilized.

The CEO has proposed that the students from Delano be welcomed by Genevieve Melody Elementary School, or Melody.

Melody will be relocated from its present location to the current Delano facility at 3937 West Wilcox Street. If this proposal is approved by the Board of Education for the City of Chicago, the resulting space utilization will not exceed the enrollment efficiency range of the 3937 West Wilcox Street's enrollment efficiency range as defined by the CPS Space Utilization Standards.

To fully explain the enrollment trend associated with these schools, I would like to direct your attention to the screen. Projected is a slide that shows the enrollment trend of Delano and Melody, green hashed lines showing the enrollment efficiency range of the 3937 West Wilcox Street facility, and a circle representing the combined projected enrollment for 2013-2014 school year.

As you can see, Melody's current enrollment of 293 students and Delano's current enrollment of 395 students combines to a total of 688 students, below the enrollment efficiency range of the 3937 West Wilcox Street facility.

Further, the projected enrollment of Delano for the 2013-2014 school year is 406 and the projected enrollment for Melody for next year is 294, for a total of 700 students, which is

also below the 3937 West Wilcox Street facility's enrollment efficiency range; thus, there is enough space within the 3937 West Wilcox Street facility for students from Delano and students from Melody.

If Delano is closed, the CEO is also proposing that Delano's attendance area be reassigned to Melody. A portion of the geographic boundary currently associated with Melody will be reassigned to Helen M. Hefferan Elementary School, or Hefferan, located at 4409 West Wilcox.

A map showing the proposed boundary change is located in your binder at tab B 23 and copies of this map were available tonight at the registration desk.

In proposing this boundary change, several factors were considered as outlined in the Review and Establishment of School Attendance Boundaries Policy, including, but not limited to, the capacities at Delano, Melody, Hefferan, geographic barriers, travel time, distance traveled, and program considerations.

You will next hear from my colleague, Wanda Washington, who will discuss the performance of Melody and highlight the proposed transition efforts. Thank you, Your Honor. This concludes my statement.

Statement of Wanda Washington, Chief of Schools for the Garfield-Humboldt Elementary

School Network

Good evening Your Honor. My name is Wanda Washington. I am the Chief of Schools for the Chicago Public Schools, Garfield-Humboldt Elementary Network.

Chicago Public Schools are divided up into Networks. Network offices are run by a Chief and provide support and oversight for the schools assigned to them on behalf of the CEO.

Melody is within the Garfield-Humboldt Elementary Network and I am responsible for the support and oversight of Melody on behalf of the CEO.

I have been the Chief of Melody since 2012. I have been with the Chicago Public Schools for over 20 years as a teacher, assistant principal and director. For the last 6 years, I have had executive level responsibility for multiple schools.

In September of 2012, after serving as the Deputy Chief, I became Chief of Schools became the Chief of Schools for the Garfield-Humboldt Network; and in this role, I supervise and provide strategic guidance for 24 schools in the areas of instructional practices in the classroom and professional development for the teaching staff.

I have a Bachelor's in Mass Communications from Illinois State University and a Masters in Educational Leadership from Concordia University

As you have already heard, Delano fits the criteria of the Chief Executive Officer's Guidelines for School Actions because it is underutilized based on CPS Space Utilization Standards and student enrollment numbers recorded on the 20th attendance day for the 2012-2013 school year.

If this proposal is approved Delano students will be welcomed by Melody, and Melody will relocate to the current Delano facility, located at 3937 West Wilcox Street.

The facility at 3937 West Wilcox Street has enough space for Delano and Melody students and the resulting combined enrollment will not exceed the facility's enrollment efficiency range.

When Delano students are welcomed by the Melody administration, staff, and students, they will be attending a higher performing school based on the CEO's Guidelines for School Actions.

The CEO's Guidelines for School Actions define a higher performing elementary school to be a school receiving a higher level on the Performance Policy for the 2011-2012 school year.

The CEO's Guidelines also define a higher-performing elementary school if the Performance Policy level is equal to be a school performing higher on the majority of four performance metrics for the 2011-2012 school year.

Both Delano and Melody received a level 2 rating in 2011-2012. Thus, the higher – performing school, under the guidelines, is the one that performed higher on the majority of four performance metrics.

The four performance metrics analyzed are the percentage of points the school received on the Performance Policy, the ISAT composite meets or exceeds score, the Value-Added score in reading, and the Value-Added score in math.

I will explain each of these metrics below and explain how Melody performed higher than Delano in 2011-2012. The first metric to compare is the schools' percentage of points received on the Performance Policy.

The Performance Policy bases its rating on a point system. Points are received for the school's current level of performance and improvement over time on standardized tests and attendance, as well as the growth of individual students from year-to-year on the state test.

For 2011-2012, Melody received 61.9% of available points and Delano received 54.8% of available points. Thus, Melody received a higher percentage of points on the Performance Policy.

The second metric is the ISAT Meets or Exceeds Composite score, which is the combined result of the ISAT reading, mathematics, and science assessments. Melody's ISAT meets or exceeds composite score was 68.8%, while Delano's meets or exceeds composite score was 73.7%.

The third and fourth metrics are the schools' Value-Added score in reading and math. Value-Added is a component of the Performance Policy that compares student academic growth on the ISAT at a school with the growth of similar students across the District.

This is done through a regression methodology that controls for nine student-level factors, including grade level, prior performance on the ISAT, free or reduced lunch eligibility, race or ethnicity, mobility, participation in the Students in Temporary Living Situations program, Individualized Education Program (or IEP) status, English Language Learner status, and gender.

Controlling for these factors allows us to see how much impact the school had on its average student over the past year. Because we control for prior performance, this metric allows us to identify schools with low test scores where growth is rapid, and schools with high test scores where growth is slow.

The Value-Added metric is a standardized measure with a mean of zero. Standardization means that the score is reported in standard deviation units, which is a measure of how far away the school's score is from the District average.

A positive number means that students at the school are growing at a faster pace than similar students in the District. For example, a positive 1 indicates that the school is one standard deviation above the mean, meaning that the school's students are growing at a faster pace than approximately 84% of schools in the District.

A score near zero means that students at the school are growing at about the same pace as similar students in the District. And a negative score means that students at the school are growing at a slower pace than similar students in the District.

As you can see, Melody's reading Value-Added score was 1.0 in 2012 and Delano's reading Value-Added score was 0.8.

This means that, on average, students at Melody grew at a faster pace in reading when compared to students at Delano. Melody's mathematics Value-Added score was 1.6 in 2012 and Delano's Value-Added score was 0.4.

This means that, on average, students at Melody grew at a faster pace in mathematics when compared to students at Delano.

To summarize, Melody performed higher than Delano in 2011-2012 on the majority of the metrics identified in the CEO's Guidelines for School Actions, and thus, is a higher performing school.

If this proposal is approved, students will receive additional supports at Delano during the remainder of this school year and at Melody next year, and the network will provide assistance to ease the transition process as much as possible.

CPS has developed a plan dedicating additional resources to address any safety concerns and to fulfill students' academic, social and emotional, and other individual needs.

The draft transition plan, explaining these additional resources, was sent home to all families affected by this proposal and is located in your binder at Tab A1.

CPS will publish final transition plans, if the Board approves this proposal, which will incorporate feedback from community meetings, this hearing, and additional input received.

The CPS Office of Safety and Security, or OSS, has worked with the Chicago Police Department, Department of Family and Support Services, local community groups and faith partners, elected officials, and other sister agencies to develop a plan for the safe transition of students. If this proposal is approved, OSS will take the following steps:

- First, OSS will review and update school safety audits, security personnel allocations, and school safety technology systems to make enhancements as appropriate,
- Second, OSS will be available to address specific safety concerns raised by students and staff.
- Third, OSS will provide Safe Passage supports for students and staff traveling to and from school. Safe Passage workers wear identifiable vests and stand on designated street corners to monitor students' safety during their travel to school in the morning and home in the afternoon. Prior to the start of the 2013-2014 school year, OSS will work with the South Shore Fine Arts administration and the community to designate specific intersections for safe passage supports.

Additionally, students will receive academic supports as they transition, including the following:

First, a Principal Transition Coordinator, or PTC, will be assigned to help the principal of Delano maintain academic rigor for the remainder of the school year and ensure a smooth transition to Melody.

PTCs are former principals, or other administrators with significant experience, who will be a resource for the administration and ensure continuity of support for faculty and students.

Second, the Melody administration will receive comprehensive, student-specific data on all transitioning students to allow staff to proactively identify individual student needs and prepare to meet those needs.

Third, in addition to the Network's general availability, I will be holding specific office hours on Wednesdays, May 1, 8, and 15 between 1:00 pm-3:00 pm at 2908 West Washington for families and students affected by this action to discuss concerns and educational options.

Fourth, principals will receive discretionary resources to provide direct academic support to students. For example, these funds may be used to provide an instructional coach, teacher leader, or to obtain an academic tutoring position or program for students in reading and math.

I will support the principals as they consider how to use these resources and approve their selections once decisions are made.

Students will also receive social and emotional supports to help them adjust to a new school environment, including the following:

First, CPS will help school staff members facilitate intervention groups or peace circles aimed at helping students work through concerns associated with the transition.

Second, CPS will help staff members implement restorative practices, such as peer circles and peer juries, to encourage peer-to-peer problem solving and resolution.

Third, groups of students in need of more individualized attention will be provided with access to highly structured interventions.

Fourth, to foster an environment that is both supportive and inclusive for all students, CPS will provide resources to the Melody leadership to implement culture-building activities, such as staff luncheons and team- and trust-building activities.

Resources will also be provided to sponsor activities such as school visits for families, coffee chats with the principal, picnics, field trips, or parent meetings to help transitioning families get to know their new school.

Finally, additional transition supports will be provided to ensure that Delano students who have unique needs or circumstances are adequately supported in this transition, including students with diverse learning needs, students in temporary living situations, English language learners, and early childhood participants.

These additional supports are described in more detail in the draft transition plan, located in your binder at tab A1.

In conclusion, Delano is underutilized. The combined enrollment of Delano and Melody students at the 3937 West Wilcox Street facility will not exceed the facility's enrollment efficiency range, and Melody is a higher performing school.

The CEO believes that this proposed school closure will help the District better serve all students and is prepared to assist students with additional supports as they transition.

Thank you for your time and attention. This concludes my statement.

Ms. Washington was asked by the Hearing Officer about the impact regarding the total number of teachers at present and in the future should the proposal be implemented. She indicated that information would be provided.

Comments From Members of the Public

Alderman Jason Ervin

Alderman Ervin is the Alderman of the 28th Ward, which includes portions of the communities of Austin, East and West Garfield Park, North and South Lawndale, Near West Side, Pilsen, Heart of Chicago. Alderman Ervin spoke in opposition to the closing of Delano and the consolidation with Melody. He has driven the proposed routes, and observed that they involve travel of up to 10 blocks, crossing gang territories, a transitional living facility, vacant structures, drug dealers, vagabonds, and two to three arterial streets. He expressed concern with reverse consolidation, where administration, teachers, and school councils take over operations. He fears a hostile environment for incoming administration, and further destabilization in this educational environment when 200 Students come into a school with 400 students. With a smaller school coming into a larger school there is no STEM, no IB, no fine arts, no magnet programs to accompany the action. Most importantly, the Alderman pointed out that Melody is on probation, and Delano is not. It is his belief that Delano's ISAT scores are higher than Melody.

Ashley Fretthold

Ms. Fretthold is an attorney with the Legal Assistance Foundation. LAF opposes Delano's closure, and bases its opposition on her contention that the draft revision plan does not comply with CPS school action guidelines, the proposed plan being essentially identical to other proposals. In addition, CPS promulgated new criteria after previously publishing guidelines without a new 21 day comment period. She contended that Melody is not in fact a higher performing school. Ms. Fretthold offered an Exhibit, which was ADMITTED into the Record.

Elizabeth Triplett

Ms. Triplett urged that the qualitative data be reviewed in light of research performed by Valerie Janesick, a qualitative data researcher. She also referenced research by Hank Rugin to the effect that collaboration is the key to school success. Ms. Triplett urged the decision makers to listen to the voices of the presenters, and discuss the inequalities of school funding.

Kandace Dowden

Ms. Dowden is a CPS employee for 33 years, 32 at Delano, 1 at Goldblatt. She noted Delano's meeting the challenge of coping with probation, and suggested that Melody children ought to be coming to Delano.

Dorothy Terry

Ms. Terry is a Delano parent. She indicated that 75% of Delano parents said they would not allow their children to attend Melody. She has enrolled her child in another school.

Stephanie Byrd

Ms. Byrd argued that Melody student population has declined 46% from 2005-2006 to 2012-2013. She compared the lower 29% Delano decline over the same period and recited a three percent increase from 2012-2013 to April 9th as compared to a five percent decrease at Melody.

Kelly Sul

Kelly Sul asked that factors such as culture and climate be considered, pointing out that Delano received a rating of strong in the category of supportive environment and ambitious instruction. Delano also outranked Melody in terms of involved families.

Student 1

Student 1 likes her school because the teachers try hard and "help us learn."

Student 2

Student 2 tells us that Ms. Sul does a good job and she likes her.

Ms. Sturgent

Ms. Sturgent, a parent, fears that Delano will be losing ground due to the probation issue, and library, computer lab, and art provided at Delano. She concluded that, Delano is “the better school not on probation.”

Student 3

Student 3 loves her school, teachers, and staff.

Stephanie Marquez

Ms. Marquez pointed out that Melody, on probation, is not a higher performing school.

Romine Byrd

Ms. Byrd is a resource teacher at Delano; she pointed out that the CPS designation of 30 students per class does not account for library (considered two classrooms), case manager and counselor’s office, parent room, and the room where the speech pathologist treats students. Also, Delano’s report card is average, while Melody’s is below average. She provide examples in fourth grade math, fifth grade reading, and overall Delano students performing at 45.1 percent while Melody was at 33.7 per cent.

Wendy Katten

Ms. Katten criticized the CPS space utilization formula, arguing that the efficiency rate formula uses 30 as the midpoint of an ideal classroom range when in fact the average class size in Illinois is 21.

Student 4

Student 4 asked the Hearing Officer not to close her school.

Latonya Rounsaville

Ms. Rounsaville has two Delano graduates who were valedictorians, a daughter who plans to be next year's valedictorian, and a second grader who is expected to be a valedictorian as well. In addition to her younger children, she has three children in college, each of whom attended Delano. She credits the administration, teachers, and staff for not only inspiring her children's education, but also for supporting her as a working mother.

The Hearing was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.

Summary of Documents Received

Binder and PowerPoint, CBE

Letter: Alderman Ervin

Statement: Legal Assistance Foundation

Correspondence: Ms. Triplett

Group Exhibit 4: Binder of photographs, documents, statistical charts, and statements

Additional Written Testimony Submitted Post-Hearing

Correspondence: Ms. Chan, attorneys for CPS

Determination, Findings, and Conclusion

As noted, in addition to summarizing the public hearing, the Hearing Officer is responsible for making a determination as to whether the chief executive officer has complied with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5-34-320 as well as the guidelines. The guidelines are those that govern school actions such as closure of schools.

In the judgment of this Hearing Officer, the points made and concerns express by member of the public are well taken. Specifically, on this Record there is insufficient consideration in the Proposal for the fact that Melody is on probation while Delano is not. This fact is not addressed by the CPS, and such an omission gives credence to those who believe that the process is flawed. This omission alone renders the draft transition plan deficient for failing to provide parents with relevant and material information reasonably necessary to allow the parents, students, and Board to evaluate the proposal. Additionally, Delano's ISAT is 4.9 points higher than Melody. The Board is urged to consider the exhibits tendered, inasmuch as they speak to the level of community interest.

The culture of Delano is unique; it is a school facility that has demonstrated significant improvement, enjoys great community support, and, from all appearances, is a crucible of progress. Until such time as the legitimate concerns articulated by the participants in this proceeding are addressed, the Board invites valid criticism should it approve this proposal.

Enter: May 6, 2013

s/ Clifford L. Meacham
Clifford L. Meacham, Hearing Officer

FURTHER THE HEARING OFFICER SAYETH NOT

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clifford L. Meacham', with a stylized, flowing script.

Hon. Clifford L. Meacham (Ret.)
Hearing Officer